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Plan and Report of the Central Intelligence Agency
Submitted to the Attorney General of the United States
and the
Director of the Office of Management and Budget
In Compliance With Executive Order 13392
Improving Agency Disclosure of Information

Background

This report is the response of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to Section 2(b) of Executive Order 13392 which requires the Chief Freedom of Information Act Officer of each federal agency subject to the FOIA to develop "an agency-specific plan to ensure that the agency's administration of the FOIA is in accordance with applicable law and the policies set forth in section 1 of this Order."

As specified by the Executive Order, this plan addresses three topics:

- Steps to reduce the backlog, including increasing process efficiency and making more documents available on websites.
- Activities designed to increase public awareness of FOIA processing.
- Milestones and timetables by which to measure progress in implementing the plan.

This plan and report conform to the format instructions issued by the Department of Justice in its April 2006 on-line edition of *FOIA Post*, "Executive Order 13,392 Implementation Guidance."

A. Characterize overall nature of agency's FOIA operations (degree of detail optional), with optional reference to areas preliminarily considered for agency review. (Agencies may also describe any particular FOIA challenges that they face.)

CIA has established a strong record in the administration of its FOIA responsibilities, and many of the requirements put forward in Executive Order 13392 are already reflected in current CIA procedures. The CIA has reduced its FOIA backlog for eight consecutive years, leading the government in that respect. The CIA accomplished this reduction despite the fact it receives some 3,000 new cases each year.

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Over the past decade, the CIA has made extensive use of information technology in the conduct of its FOIA program. A new system with even greater capabilities known as the CIA Automated Declassification Review Environment (CADRE) is scheduled to be deployed in the fall of 2006. CADRE will streamline the FOIA workflow.

CIA informs the public about FOIA policies and procedures through the *Federal Register*, the *Code of Federal Regulations*, and its website, found at <http://www.foia.cia.gov>. This information tells requesters how to file a request; and how the Agency decides fee categories, decisions on requests for expedited treatment, and appeal rights.

The website also directs requesters to electronic copies of the most popular documents and collections as well as recently declassified materials. In response to a suggestion from an academic member of the Director, Central Intelligence Agency's (DCIA) Historical Review Panel, the CIA recently improved its document indexing on the site, enabling requesters to see lists of all the key words under which documents are indexed. CIA maintains a FOIA "hotline" so that requesters can call and speak with a case manager to check the status of their case or find out additional information.

CIA faces two particularly important challenges in processing FOIA cases. First, our review of documents takes longer than would be the case with non-intelligence information because the Agency must carefully scrutinize each responsive document to ensure that it does not reveal intelligence sources and methods. Second, because we rely on experts from our various components to determine what can be released, and because many of our documents contain information from other agencies, a careful internal and external coordination process is required.

B. List all areas selected for review.

1. The current state of CIA's automated electronic FOIA tracking and documentation system.
2. Overall website improvement.
3. Proactive disclosure of information.
4. Reducing the backlog.
5. Forms of communication with requesters.
6. Tracking the progress of cases.

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C. Include narrative statement summarizing results of review.

1. The current state of CIA's automated electronic FOIA tracking and documentation system.

CIA's current automated electronic system, called the Management of Officially Released Information (MORI) system, is nearing the end of its useful life. The new CADRE system is expected to become operational in the fourth quarter of 2006. It will provide a more efficient workflow; have more stability; and enable faster, more accurate searches for previously released documents; thus, helping us to improve our processing of FOIA cases.

2. Overall website improvement.

The CIA website complies with the latest Department of Justice and Office of Management and Budget guidelines, but we are seeking to make it easier for the public to use. We will add an easier way to search for CIA FOIA regulations as well as direct links to the FOIA websites of other intelligence agencies.

3. Proactive disclosure of information.

The public website contains many of the collections and documents the public most often requests, including the Bay of Pigs covert action, reports on Unidentified Flying Objects, information on Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, and the U-2 flight of Francis Gary Powers. We intend to add additional documents and collections on a more frequent basis.

4. Reducing the backlog.

CIA has reduced its FOIA backlog for eight consecutive fiscal years. Nonetheless, we currently have over 100 cases five years old or older. These cases often are large, complex, contain multiple equities, and can involve the review of thousands of documents comprising tens of thousands of pages. CIA is making the closure of these older cases a priority.

5. Forms of communication with requesters.

CIA is reviewing the often-technical language used in its correspondence with requesters to make it clearer and easier to understand.

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6. Tracking the progress of cases.

We are seeking to further improve our capability to monitor the progress of outstanding FOIA cases. This is being accomplished through new procedures being followed by our FOIA processing officers, and the improved technical capabilities offered by the CADRE system.

D. List all areas chosen as improvement areas for agency plan.

1. The current state of CIA's automated electronic FOIA tracking and documentation system.
2. Overall website improvement.
3. Proactive disclosure of information.
4. Reducing the backlog.
5. Forms of communication with requesters.
6. Tracking the progress of cases.

E. For each improvement area provide:

1. Name
2. Brief statement of goals(s)/objective(s) (i.e. improvement(s) sought to be made)
3. List of all distinct steps planned to be taken
4. Time milestones (in relation to specific timetables and outcomes)
5. Means of measurement of success (e.g., quantitative assessment of backlog reduction expressed in numbers of pending requests, percentages, or working days).

E 1.1. *The current state of CIA's automated electronic FOIA tracking and documentation system.*

1.2 The CIA goal is to have a more stable and functional electronic system for processing FOIA cases.

1.3 Step one is to deliver the FOIA software that will replace the aging MORI system with the new more stable and functional CADRE system. The second is to test and validate the software. Third is to remedy any deficiencies. Fourth is to validate system readiness. Fifth is to approve operations for FOIA case management. Sixth is to migrate each of our FOIA teams onto the new system.

1.4 CIA expects CADRE to achieve initial operating capability and be deployed in the fourth quarter of 2006.

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1.5 The measure of success will be the extent to which the new system, once deployed, provides a more efficient workflow, is more stable, and enables faster, more accurate searches for previously released documents.

E 2.1 *Overall website improvement.*

2.2 CIA will make it easier for the public to locate information on the FOIA website, and will provide links to the FOIA websites of other agencies.

2.3 A special link will be added to provide direct access to CIA FOIA regulations. Links also will be added to the FOIA websites of a number of other agencies.

2.4 These steps will be completed by 31 December 2006.

2.5 We will seek public feedback about the utility of the changes to our website and consider suggestions for additional adjustments.

E 3.1 *Proactive disclosure of information.*

3.2 We will add additional documents and collections to the CIA website.

3.3 Sufficient resources will be dedicated to document review to ensure the CIA website can be updated quarterly.

3.4 We will add documents to the website by 30 September and again on 30 December 2006.

3.5 Success will be determined by the addition of documents or collections to the website every quarter.

E 4.1 *Reducing the backlog.*

4.2 The CIA goal is to reduce the overall backlog of cases, and within that goal, to address the oldest cases.

4.3 A special task force has been established to work exclusively on old cases, and individual FOIA case managers and component reviewers have been made responsible for closely monitoring the status of each old case assigned to them. In addition, since about a third of these older cases are awaiting responses from other agencies, CIA has written to the chief FOIA

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officers of those agencies seeking their earliest attention to these cases.

4.4 CIA will reduce the overall backlog of FOIA cases 10 percent by 1 October 2006 and will reduce the backlog of old cases 25 percent by 1 October 2006.

4.5 Success will be measured by attaining the milestones delineated in 4.4.

E 5.1 *Forms of communication with requesters.*

5.2 CIA will revise its correspondence with requesters to make its responses easier to understand.

5.3 CIA will revise its correspondence templates to remove unnecessary jargon and technical language. We also will emphasize direct contact between the FOIA case officer and the requester in cases where we need clarification of the request in order to be more responsive.

5.4 CIA will immediately increase direct contact with requesters, and revise correspondence templates. All templates will be revised by 31 December 2006.

5.5 We will monitor requester feedback on the clarity of our response letters.

E 6.1 *Tracking the progress of cases.*

6.2 CIA will institute more intensive monitoring of the status of each FOIA case by implementing new procedures and technologies.

6.3 Case managers will be required to send "tickler" notices at regular intervals either to internal CIA components or other government agencies for all outstanding cases. Case managers will utilize CADRE to better monitor the status of their assigned cases, provide management with periodic status reports, and make suggestions to overcome processing obstacles.

6.4 The new procedures will be in place by 30 August 2006 and the CADRE system is expected to be in operation by the end of the fourth quarter of 2006.

6.5 Success will be measured by a reduction in the median response time for FOIA cases.

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F. For the entire plan, group the improvement areas into the following time periods:

1. Areas anticipated to be completed by 31 December 2006

CIA anticipates completing the following by 31 December 2006:

- Replacing MORI with CADRE, an updated automated electronic database to track and document all FOIA cases.
- Overall website improvement.
- Proactive disclosure of information.
- Tracking the progress of cases.
- Reducing the backlog by 10 percent, and the backlog of old cases by 25 percent.
- Revising the correspondence language to make it more clear and understandable.

2. Areas anticipated to be completed by 31 December 2007

CIA anticipates completing the following by 31 December 2007:

- Reducing the backlog by 10 percent, and the backlog of old cases by 25 percent.

3. Areas anticipated to be completed after 31 December 2007.

CIA anticipates completing the following after 31 December 2007:

- Continuing to reduce the backlog by 10 percent, and the backlog of old cases by 25 percent annually.